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ABSTRACT

On April 1, 1970, we were counted along with the rest of the people in the nation. The Census Bureau found that we constitute about one percent of the population. There are 1,369,412 of us--591,290 Japanese-Americans, 435,062 Chinese-Americans, 343,060 Filipino-Americans, 70,000 Korean-Americans, 100,000 Hawaiians, 107,000 Turkish, 85,000 Lebanese, 59,000 Israelis, 59,000 Syrians, 88,000 other Western Asians, 9,000 Pakistanis, 76,000 Indians, and 108,000 other Asians. In the decade 1960 to 1970, our number increased more than 55 percent while the entire U.S. population increased by 13.3 percent. For the most part, we have remained in the West near where our parents and grandparents settled when they arrived to work in old California. Only the Chinese-Americans have crossed the country in significant numbers to settle in the Northeast. About half of us live in just three metropolitan areas. 1.2 million of us--90 percent of our total--live in urban areas. Our median family income is higher than ever before, and for most of us, it is higher than the 9,596 dollars which was the national median in 1969. The 1970 Census showed that 182,000 or 48 percent of our homes were owned or being bought by the families living in them. Some 622,000 of us constitute our labor force and all but three percent of these are employed. (Author/JM)

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WE, THE ASIAN AMERICANS

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
Social and Economic Statistics Administration
BUREAU OF THE CENSUS

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On April 1, 1970, we were counted along with the rest of the people in the Nation. The Census Bureau found that we constitute about 1 percent of the population. There are 1,369,412 of us—591,290 Japanese-Americans; 435,062 Chinese-Americans; and 343,060 Filipino-Americans.*
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*1970 Census figures also showed 70,000 Korean-Americans, and 100,000 Hawaiians in the United States. There are also 107,000 Turkish, 85,000 Lebanese, 59,000 Israelis, 59,000 Syrians, 88,000 other Western Asians, 9,000 Pakistanis, 76,000 Indians, and 108,000 other Asians here.

WE, THE ASIAN AMERICANS

No. 13 in a series of reports from the 1970 Census

Like all immigrants, we came to America seeking better lives for ourselves and our posterity. We came to find a place in the American way of life.

We who are Chinese came in the mid-1800's—at first to work in the California gold mines. We helped to build the railroads spanning the land, then we worked in the orchards and farms of the West Coast, and then in new manufacturing plants.

We who are Japanese also came as laborers. We came in the late 1890's to work as laborers in the sugar refineries in Hawaii. In the 1900's we came to the continental United States to work on the farms, in the mines, and in the canneries, and also to help build the growing Western railroads. In the cities, some of us became small merchants while others worked as domestics, gardeners, etc.

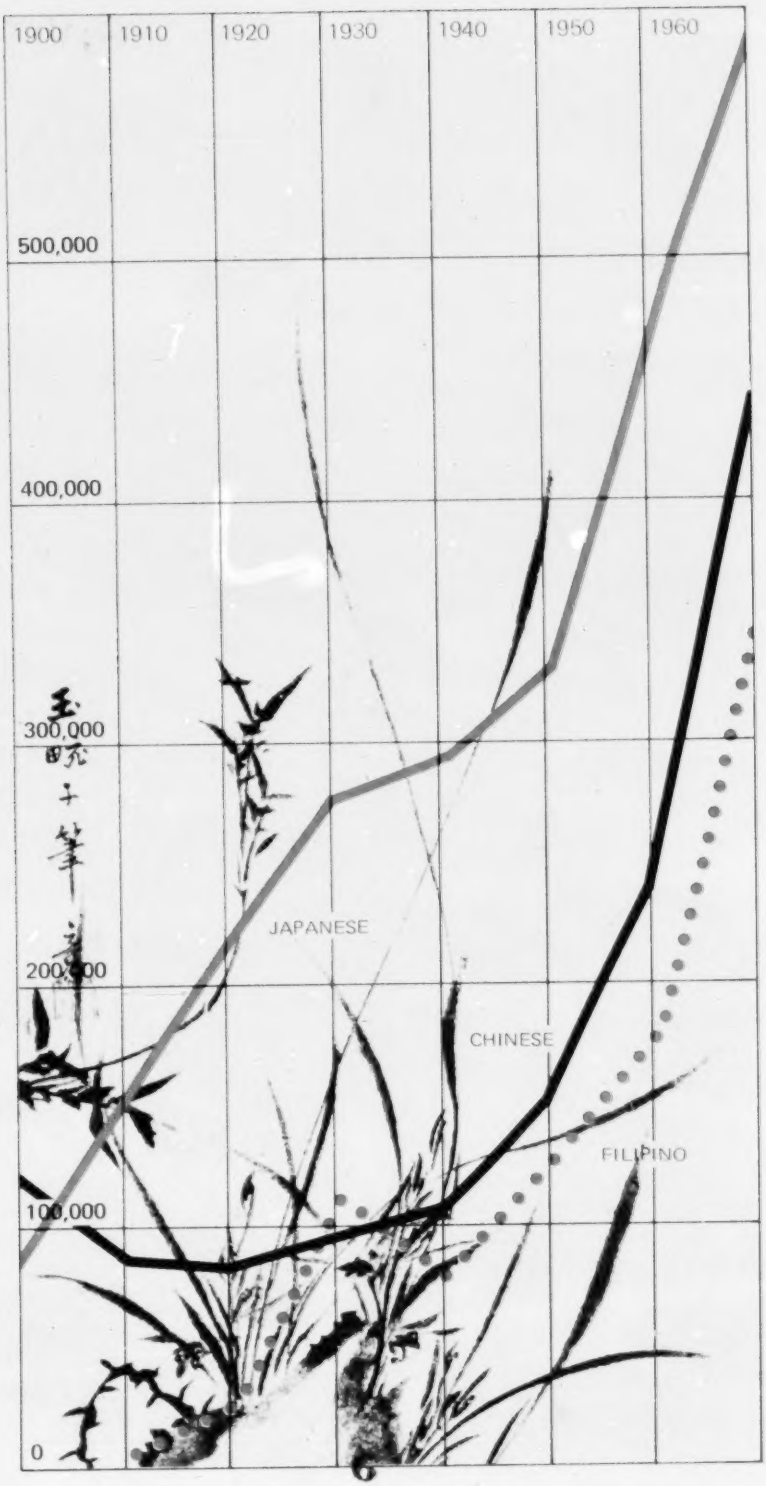
We who are Filipino came in growing numbers after 1924. We worked on ranches. We took jobs as elevator operators and bell boys, waiters, hotel attendants, Pullman porters, and seamen in coastal shipping. But we were not "aliens" for we owed no allegiance to any foreign government. In fact, before we came to these shores we had lived under American administration.

Obviously, it has not always been easy for us to immigrate to this country. Our early history here was marked with a succession of various kinds of exclusion laws limiting and eventually prohibiting Asian immigration to the United States, but today there are no exclusion laws. Immigration from Japan, China, and the Philippines is subject to the same laws that determine admission qualifications and quotas of immigrants from other Nations of the world.

OUR NUMBERS ARE GROWING

In the decade 1960 to 1970, our number increased more than 55 percent while the entire U.S. population increased by 13.3 percent. On Census Day, 1970, the number of Japanese-Americans among us had increased 27 percent; the number of Chinese-Americans had increased 83 percent; and the number of Filipino-Americans had increased 95 percent over 1960 figures.

We began a slow but steady increase following repeal of the exclusion laws during the 1940's but our growth has not been dependent on or primarily because of immigration. Sixty-two percent of us are native Americans. Only the Filipino-Americans among us have a majority born abroad.



POPULATION GROWTH
1900-1970

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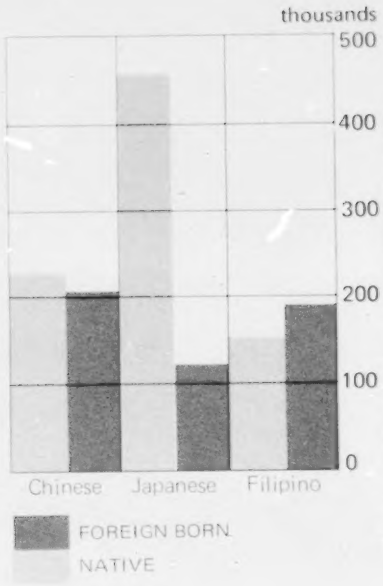
WE ARE WESTERNERS

For the most part, we have remained in the West near where our parents and grandparents settled when they arrived to work in the gold fields, orchards, and factories of old California. Seventy-one percent of us still live in the Western region of the United States, with 38 percent in California. Some 520,000 Japanese-, Chinese-, and Filipino-Americans constitute 2.6 percent of California's population. Another 363,000, or 27 percent of the U.S. total live in Hawaii where we are 47.3 percent of the State's population.

Only the Chinese-Americans have crossed the country in significant numbers to settle the Northeast. Some 115,000 of the Nation's Chinese-Americans live in the Northeast and constitute 62 percent of our total population in that part of the country. Nearly 82,000 of the Chinese-Americans living in the Northeast live in New York State. Altogether, 186,000 Japanese-, Chinese-, and Filipino-Americans, nearly 14 percent of our nationwide total, live in the Northeast and 8 percent of us live in New York.

As for the rest of the country, 110,000 or 8 percent of us live in the North Central States, and 97,000 or 7 percent of us live in the South.



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WE ARE URBANITES

When the railroads were built and the gold mines emptied and when there was no longer a demand for their labor on the farms, our ancestors moved to the cities seeking new means of employment. We have remained a part of the Nation's urban population. Today, 1.2 million of us—90 percent of our total—live in urban areas. Ninety-six percent of the Chinese-Americans among us, 89 percent of the Japanese-Americans and 85 percent of the Filipino-Americans live in urban areas. More than 54 percent of us—744,000 in all—live in the inner cities. Comparatively, 109,000 or 8 percent live in rural nonfarm areas while only 18,000 or 1 percent of us live on farms.

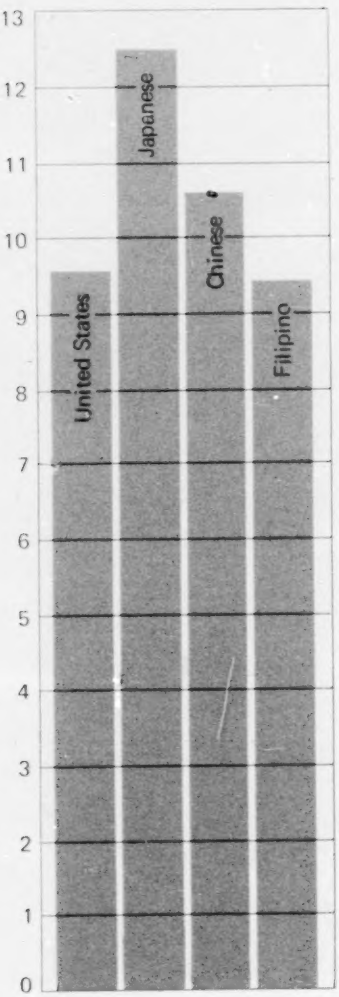
About half of us live in just three metropolitan areas. We are most concentrated in the Honolulu metropolitan area, where 283,000 of us constitute 45 percent of the population. Another 165,000 of us make up 5 percent of the population in the San Francisco-Oakland, California, metropolitan area and 178,000 make up 3 percent of the population in the Los Angeles-Long Beach area.

OUR INCOME

Our median family income is higher than ever before, and for most of us it is higher than the $9,596 which was the national median in 1969. That year Japanese-American families enjoyed a median income of $12,515 and Chinese-American families had a median of $10,610. The median annual income among Filipino-Americans in 1969 was slightly less than the national median at $9,318.

On the other hand, while 13 percent of the American people must live on incomes below the low-income or poverty level, we have managed to keep our poverty rate somewhat below the national average. Fewer than 11 percent of us had to live on incomes below the low-income level in 1969: 7 percent of the Japanese-Americans, 13 percent of Chinese-Americans, and about 13 percent of the Filipino-Americans.

Proportionately, fewer of our families live below the low-income level. About 11 percent of all American families received income below the low-income level in 1969 but about 9 percent of our families fell into this category: 8,572 or 6 percent of Japanese-American families; 9,753 or 10 percent of Chinese-American families; 8,220 or 12 percent of Filipino-American families.



MEDIAN INCOMES

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OUR HOMES

The American dream of owning a home is a reality for many of us. The 1970 Census showed that 182,000 or 48 percent of our homes were owned or being bought by the families living in them.

The median values of our homes range between $22,000 and $29,000, several thousand dollars above the national median of $17,000. Forty-seven percent of our homes are in the $25,000 to $50,000 price range.

Most of our homes and the apartment buildings in which we live are not very new. Some 133,000 or 35 percent were built in 1939 or earlier, and still another 82,000 or 22 percent were built between 1950 and 1959. Only 3 percent are quite new, built during 1969 and early 1970.

One-third of our homes, owned or rented, have more than one bath, and one-quarter are equipped with air conditioning. Some 215,000 or 57 percent of them are single unit or one-family dwellings. The rest are in multi-unit structures such as apartment buildings and duplexes.

Above 166,000 or 44 percent of our households have at least one automobile. Another 130,000 or 34 percent have two or more.

OUR JOBS

Some 622,000 of us constitute our labor force and all but 3 percent of these are employed. We are sales people and manufacturers, clerical workers and government employees, craftsmen and public administrators, educators and entertainers. We are employed in just about every aspect of America's working world but we are more concentrated in some areas than in others.

Most of us (71 percent) are private wage or salary earners and many (18 percent) are employed by various Federal, State, and local government agencies. Some of us (8 percent) are self-employed. In fact, we, more than any other minority group in this country, have become owners of small businesses. Very few of us (1 percent) are what the Census Bureau calls "unpaid family workers" working in small family businesses.

We are most concentrated in the wholesale and retail trades where some 141,000 or 23 percent of us are employed. The professional and related services such as medicine, law, education, and engineering have attracted 125,000 or 20 percent of us, and 94,000 or 15 percent of us are involved in the manufacture of durable and nondurable goods.

Obviously, we have moved away from the kinds of jobs our ancestors took when they arrived in this country—the jobs so long considered traditional. Today 33,000 of us, a scant 5 percent, are employed in agriculture, forestry, or fisheries and only 936—far less than 1 percent of us—are still employed in mining.

INDUSTRY OF EMPLOYED PERSONS 16 YEARS AND OVER

	JAPANESE	CHINESE	FILIPINO
Wholesale & retail trade	61,958	58,903	19,726
Professional and related fields	50,391	39,111	35,066
Manufacturing:			
durable goods	20,700	11,996	10,636
nondurable goods	20,690	19,720	10,444
Public Administration	20,889	11,606	9,095
Agr., For., Fisheries	19,403	1,634	12,225
Mining	401	308	227

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WE ARE FAMILY PEOPLE

Of the 51 million families in the United States, 300,000 are ours. 134,000 Japanese-American families, 95,000 Chinese-American families, and 71,000 Filipino-American families. The number of our families has increased 64 percent in the decade 1960-1970.

In 87 percent of our families, the husband and wife are both present. Nine percent of our families are headed by women. The proportion of families headed by women increased only slightly from 7 percent in 1960. The greatest increase in the proportion of families headed by women has been among Filipino-American families, whose proportion increased from 5 percent in 1960 to 9 percent in 1970. This compares with the 11 percent of all American families that are headed by women.

In urban areas where most of us live and where the proportion of families headed by women is generally higher, 12 percent of all families have female heads. Among our urban families, 9 percent are headed by women.

The future of any people depends upon the youth among those people. Young minds and spirits must be developed and trained through

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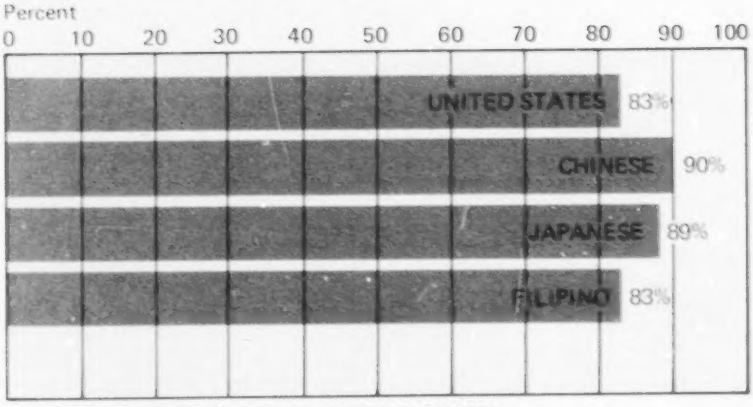
love and family traditions. Some 429,000 or 31 percent of us have not yet reached 18 years of age. Eighty-eight percent of this group enjoy a complete family unit, living with both mother and father. Among Chinese-American families, 90 percent of these youngsters live with both parents. This is the highest proportion among us. Among all American families, 83 percent of the youth under 18 live with both parents.

Again, in urban areas where the proportion of youth living with both parents tends to decrease, 81 percent of America's urban youth under 18 live with both parents. This compares to 88 percent of our urban youth living with both parents. The proportion is highest again among Chinese-American families, where slightly more than 90 percent live with both parents.



18 YEAR OLDS LIVING WITH BOTH PARENTS

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OUR EDUCATION

Education is an important aspect of the role we are assuming in American life. About 50 percent of us have completed at least 12 years of schooling. Between 1960 and 1970, the proportion of us between the ages 20 and 44 whose formal education ended after 4 years of high school decreased from 38 percent to 31 percent. In the meantime, the proportion of us in this age group who have completed 4 years of college or more has nearly doubled, climbing from 15 to 26 percent in that same 10-year period.

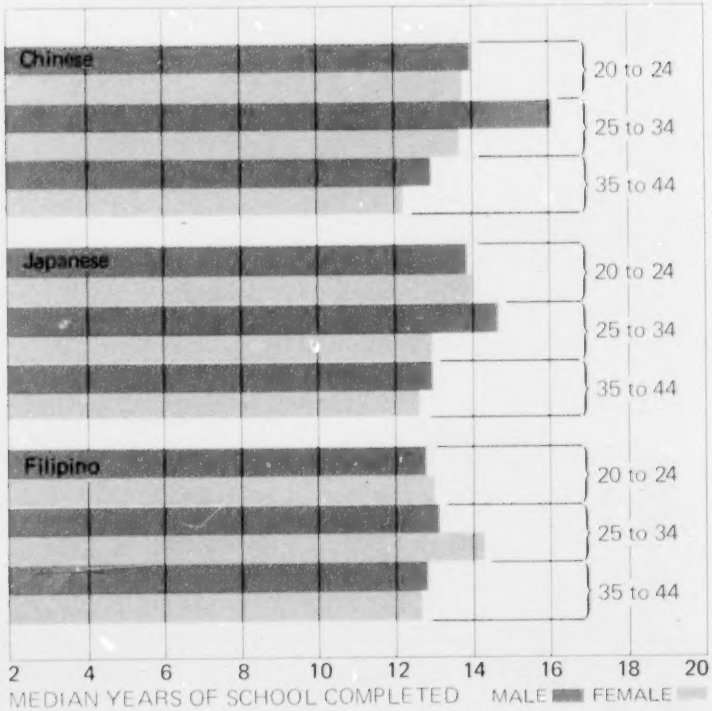
Today, 26 percent of the Chinese-Americans 25 years old and over have completed 4 or more years of college. This is true of 22 percent of the Filipino-Americans 25 and over and 16 percent of the Japanese-Americans in this age group. This compares to the 11 percent of all Americans 25 and over who have completed 4 or more years of college.

And we are still learning. At the time of the 1970 Census, more than 102,000 of us were enrolled in colleges and universities across the Nation: 51,000 Chinese-Americans, 38,000 Japanese-Americans, and 13,000 Filipino-Americans.

This then is our "now" in the United States—a "now" built upon the frustrations and despair of a "then" in a strange, new and, at times, hostile land. We are now a part of that land.

Our number is small but growing and our tomorrow is promising. We are no longer struggling to catch up with the rest of the Nation. As these 1970 Census data show, in many areas we have surpassed the national averages.

As we the Japanese-, Chinese-, and Filipino-Americans look toward tomorrow, we look with an eye toward leadership and positive contribution and a well earned place in the American way of life.



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